

City of Bloomington
Parks, Arts and Recreation Commission
July 8th, 2015

6:30 p.m.

Present: Gordie Holm, Chairperson; Jim McCarthy, Vice Chairperson; Commissioners, Peter Moe, Ben Murphy, Dave Rickert, Lenny Schmitz

Absent: Commissioner, Marie Holm

Staff: Randy Quale, Parks and Recreation Manager

Alison Warren, Recording Secretary

Diann Kirby, Community Services Director

Larry Lee, Community Development Director

Julie Farnham, Senior Planner

Call to Order Chairperson G. Holm called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Visitors Parks and Recreation Intern CJ Harris attended the meeting as a guest to learn more about the Parks, Arts and Recreation Commission. Diann Kirby and Julie Farnham attended the
Item #2 meeting to give various presentations to the PARC Commission.

Hyland Greens Golf Course Options Presentation Community Services Director Diann Kirby gave a presentation regarding the Hyland Green Golf Course. Kirby gave a background of the course stating that it has been losing money for at least the past decade. She also shared the declining numbers in golf over all as a sport in Minnesota and nationwide.
Item #3.1

Five options were presented for the Hyland Greens Golf Course. Kirby stated that the first option was to continue operations as they currently are. For this option to be viable, funding from the property tax levy and additional capital funds would be needed.

The second option is to convert the course into parkland. This option preserves green space and has the potential for new activities or recreation opportunities. Although this option would also create a new expense for maintenance and also does not have the ability to generate income. Kirby stated that this model is not a new one, as it has been executed in

other communities at Leigh Acre Trailhead Park and Fred Richards Golf Course.

The third option would be to sell the land for development. This option would eliminate the annual operating deficit and provide a one-time cash infusion. The estimated value of the land is \$10 to \$12 million. A hybrid approach of parkland and development was also discussed.

The fourth option is to work with a private management company to run the course. This option provides the potential to eliminate the operating deficit but would also include some sort of fees. Also, this option would require a management company to be interested in the course and at this time, with no banquet facility, the interest seems unlikely.

The fifth and final option for the Hyland Greens Golf Course would be to partner with a local company to provide a year round facility. This option was generated due to the initial interest of Minnesota Golf Academy in partnering with the City for this type of facility. In 2014, the City began drawing up contracts for this potential partnership but it was halted when MGA was not able to submit their financial information to the City in a timely manner.

Kirby stated that after review by the City Council, it was determined they were most interested in the options of parkland, development, or a hybrid of the two. City Council is looking for a task force to continue to develop these ideas. A member of PARC is requested to participate on this task force.

Holm inquired as to where the money would go if the property was sold for development. Kirby stated that this would be discussed within the task force. Moe inquired if option five, the year round facility, is still an option or if another partner is interested. Kirby stated that there is still interest but nothing concrete at this time. Schmitz inquired if the current land of Hyland Greens could be used as potential location for a new Community Center. Kirby stated that this is also another potential option.

P/Moe, L/Schmitz, to appoint Jim McCarthy as the PARC representative to the Hyland Greens Golf Course task force. Motion carried 6-0.

P/Moe, J/McCarthy, to appoint Lenny Schmitz as the alternate or if room additional PARC representative to the Hyland Greens Golf Course task force. Motion carried 6-0.

Creekside Community Center provides thriving social opportunities for seniors but there is inadequate space to conduct programs and minimal flexibility to modify rooms. The cost to improve Creekside would be significant at \$4.3 million.

The recommendation from HGA Architects include four general areas; a large multipurpose space, gymnasium space, exercise tracks and multi-use classrooms. Based on these four items, the community center would be 94,175 square feet and cost an estimated \$32 million. An additional \$10 million would be needed for soft costs such as furniture and engineering. The total cost of nearly \$42 million does not include any site acquisition costs, if necessary.

Schmitz inquired about the demand for gymnasium space. Through his conversation with community members he does not hear about the need for additional courts, especially with the school activity centers having so many courts already.

Moe inquired about the indoor aquatic center option, which was not chosen as one of the top four spaces. He wondered what the proposed size of 21,000 square feet was in comparison to the current Bloomington Family Aquatic Center. Quale stated that he believed the current pool vessel was around 19,000 square feet, so very similar in size.

McCarthy inquired about the approximate acreage that would be needed for the proposed facility. Kirby stated that at least 8 – 10 acres would be needed for the facility and parking. She also mentioned that it could be up to 15 – 20 acres if a park like setting would be involved in the outdoor area of the project.

Moe inquired if estimates were done of the areas or options that were not chosen, in case a public input or taskforce were to decide on a different option as a priority. Kirby said estimates were done on all options. Rickert wondered if Hyland Greens could be a good site location for the new community center. He also suggested that if the City were able to sell Creekside, it would be another source of income for the project. Rickert inquired about the value of that property. Kirby stated that Presbyterian Homes has expressed interest in the site in the past.

Schmitz expressed his strong feelings about the community center. He stated that having a young family and bringing young families to Bloomington should be a priority. To date, Schmitz stated that the family component of the Community center has not been brought to the table. He said that in order to make a community facility successful, you need to have a

big ticket item or a draw to bring people in such as an indoor playground or an indoor aquatic facility. Schmitz stated that Bloomington is more than just seniors and athletics; there needs to be something that's appealing to families.

McCarthy built on these statements, adding that it seems as though the community center is just replacing things we already have but not adding anything new to the community. The cost is so large, but it doesn't seem like the City would be gaining anything. He expressed that there is a lot of opportunity and it would be a shame to miss the target. McCarthy also mentioned that all of the top four areas listed in the community center needs assessment are already available in Bloomington. He questioned why the City would want to compete with already existing fitness and indoor gymnasium facilities. Moe supported the statements made by McCarthy and Schmitz.

Schmitz inquired about the usage of the gyms at the high school activity centers. Kirby stated that the City is meeting with the school district regarding the community center study.

Kirby stated that a community engagement process is part of the decisions making. She said that this is the reason for the task force and community meetings; to continue to gain knowledge of what the citizens of Bloomington want in a Community Center. Quale added to that saying a lot of things change and shift while going through a public input process. He said that these are not locked in choices, but a good place to start.

Creative Placemaking Presentation

Item #3.3

Community Development Director Larry Lee and Senior Planner Julie Farnham presented regarding the Creative Placemaking Plan. Creative Placemaking started through the Our Town grant in partnership with Artistry. It included the charrette, a little box sauna, the Cypress semiconductor mural and more. Lee stated that this was the test drive of what will be done in the future. He said that they have learned that it takes a lot of time connecting the hosts with artists. He also mentioned that most of the projects take a lot of administration time and that there is a need for technical skills and expertise such as legal, public relations and marketing.

With the grant period coming to an end, Lee stated that this is an opportunity for the City to continue the momentum and eventually create a permanent phase for Creative Placemaking throughout the entire City. To continue Creative Placemaking in the City, Lee said that the plan is to compose a Commission. This Commission would include six members appointed by the City Council and three appointed by the Artistry Board. Members may include non-residents.

Lee also said that management of the plan is an important piece to the puzzle and that this includes hiring a part time Creative Placemaking director. The annual budget for Creative Placemaking is \$400,000 to cover the costs of staff, contracted expertise, one major project

and three minor projects. The funds are coming from the hotel/motel and liquor taxes that are paid mostly by visitors to the City of Bloomington.

McCarthy inquired about how they pair projects and locations. Farnham stated that they seek artists without a location and then seek out hosts who would like to consider a placemaking project. She also stated that they currently have a list of interested hosts that they are keeping current for the future. The City has also helped other organizations achieve goals in new ways such as the walking theater performance that was held at the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

Rickert expressed his happiness with the exposure of the Wildlife Refuge as a part of the South Loop and creative placemaking. He stated he is a strong advocate for the area and its utilization.

D/Rickert, L/Schmitz, to approve the Creative Placemaking Plan as presented. Motion carried 6-0.

Select the 2014 P&R
Award of Excellence
Recipient

Item #3.4

Staff provided the nomination of Paul Edwardson for the 2015 P&R Award of Excellence. Holm stated that Paul has really earned the award. McCarthy inquired about Paul, as he had not met him in the past. Quale stated that Paul Edwardson was the Park Maintenance Superintendent for over 30 years. He had a significant impact on development projects, overall maintenance and many other contributions to the City. He is also a long time certified playground safety instructor who has traveled around the country to train others. Many of the current practices in Park Maintenance were developed by Paul.

P/Moe, J/McCarthy, to nominate Paul Edwardson for the 2015 P&R Award of Excellence. The motion carried 5-0.

Minnesota River Valley
Master Plan Update

Item #4.1

Quale presented the Minnesota River Valley Master Plan update. A summary of the recommendations were provided to the Commission. Quale stated that the final draft will be prepared and brought back to Council by years end for approval. Moe stated that the plan looks very nice. The next steps recommended by Council were to include a more in depth natural resources plan, a trail plan, signage plan and a historic resource plan.

2015 Cultural Arts
Organization Funding
Program Update

Quale stated City Council has approved Cultural Arts Funding. He also mentioned that the City would like to add an additional \$10,000 for new organizations next year. Moe expressed his thanks to M. Holm for her participation on the panel and also praised the work that staff Jim Urie does to put this together.

Item #4.2

Alternative
Transportation Plan
Update

Quale stated that the City Council has directed staff to address a few items including the maintenance plan and costs as far as maintaining current and future trails. Engineering staff will be rewriting the maintenance section of the document and some other minor revisions will be made. This item is scheduled to be brought back to City Council for approval in September.

Item #4.3

City Sidewalks and Park
Trails Usage Policy

Quale stated that this document has already been reviewed and approved by the Commission. No changes have been made but the intention is to incorporate this into the Alternative Transportation Plan as an appendix. Amendments may be necessary after discussions with the DNR and FWS as to the use regulations for the state trail.

Item #3.3

Park Improvement
Projects Update

The Commission reviewed the park improvement projects update highlighting the Valley View Tennis Courts and the bicycle repair stations. The Commission had no further questions or comments.

Item #4.5

City Council Action
Pertaining to Parks and
Recreation

The Commission reviewed the City Council action pertaining to Parks and Recreation from the Regular Meetings on May 18th, June 1st and June 22nd.

Item #5.1

Park and Recreation
Manager's Report

The Commission reviewed the Parks and Recreation Manager's Report. Quale highlighted the new sign at the Toro Grandstand/Red Haddock Baseball Field, foxes reported in Running Park, a pending lawsuit regarding 8201 Park Ave. and a National 2015 Young Professional Fellowship by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) award given to Recreation Supervisor, John Stutzman. The Commission had no further questions or concerns.

Item #5.2

Joint Meeting with
Planning Commission –
August 6th

Quale stated that the joint meeting with the Planning Commission has been cancelled and will not be rescheduled. The presentation will now be given to both Commissions separately.

Item #6.1

Staff Recommendation
to Cancel August 12th
Regular Meeting

L/Schmitz, D/Rickert, to cancel the August 12th regular meeting of the Parks, Arts and Recreation Commission. The motion carried 5-0. Quale stated the next PARC regular meeting will be September 9th.

Item #6.2

Approval of Minutes – L/Schmitz, J/McCarthy, to approve the minutes of the May 13, 2015 Parks, Arts and Recreation Commission meeting. The motion carried 7-0.
May 13th, 2015

Item #7.1

Approval of Minutes – L/Schmitz, P/Moe, to approve the minutes of the May 27, 2015 Parks, Arts and Recreation Commission meeting. The motion carried 7-0.
May 27th, 2015

Item #7.2

Adjournment G/Holm, L/Schmitz, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 7-0. The meeting was
adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

Item #8

Alison Warren

Recording Secretary